

**BEFORE THE TENNESSEE REGULATORY AUTHORITY AT
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE**

April 10, 2000

IN RE:)	
APPLICATION OF NASHVILLE GAS COMPANY,)	
A DIVISION OF PIEDMONT NATURAL GAS)	Docket No. 99-00994
COMPANY, INC. FOR AN ADJUSTMENT OF ITS)	
RATES AND CHARGES, THE APPROVAL OF)	
REVISED SERVICE REGULATIONS)	

**INITIAL ORDER GRANTING INTERVENTION
AND SETTING PROCEDURAL SCHEDULE**

This matter is before the Tennessee Regulatory Authority ("Authority") upon the Application of Nashville Gas Company, a Division of Piedmont Natural Gas Company, Inc. ("Nashville Gas") for an adjustment of its rates and charges, the approval of revised tariffs and the approval of revised service regulations. At a regularly scheduled Authority Conference held on February 1, 2000, the Directors of the Authority unanimously appointed the General Counsel or his designee to act as Hearing Officer in this proceeding for the purpose of hearing preliminary matters and setting a procedural schedule to completion. On February 11, 2000, the Consumer Advocate Division of the Office of the Attorney General ("Consumer Advocate") filed a *Complaint or Petition to Intervene* in this proceeding.

On April 6, 2000, counsel for Nashville Gas and the Consumer Advocate participated in a telephonic Status Conference which was held for the purposes of considering the Petition for Intervention filed by the Consumer Advocate, developing a procedural schedule and discussing

further suspension of the Application of Nashville Gas.¹ Due to the unavailability of General Counsel, Authority Counsel Gary Hotvedt presided over the Status Conference as a specially designated Hearing Officer.

Without objection, the Consumer Advocate's Petition to Intervene was granted. Discussion was held regarding a letter request to intervene sent by Associated Valley Industries, Inc. ("AVI") to the Authority on March 15, 2000. Counsel for Nashville Gas and the Consumer Advocate stated that they had not received a copy of AVI's request and therefore did not deem it properly filed. The acting Hearing Officer did not further discuss AVI's request with the parties.

The parties discussed the establishment of a procedural schedule to completion which provided for discovery and the submission of pre-filed testimony. The schedule agreed upon by the parties is reflected as follows:

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| May 2 | Discovery completed (Should other parties be permitted to intervene in this proceeding, such parties may be subject to discovery by the Applicant and by the Consumer Advocate after May 2; however, such subsequent intervenors must complete any discovery of the Applicant and the Consumer Advocate by May 2). |
| May 10 | Intervenor testimony is due. |
| May 17 | Informal settlement conference of the parties. |
| May 24 | Rebuttal testimony is due. |
| June 5-8 | Hearing |

As a result of additional time required for the filing of responses by Nashville Gas to Authority data requests and due to the unavailability for the initially scheduled hearing of

¹ A representative of Associated Valley Industries, Inc. was advised of the telephonic Status Conference but did not participate.

certain witnesses for Nashville Gas, a hearing in this matter has been proposed for the dates of June 5 through 8, 2000. To provide sufficient time for a decision on the merits by the Directors of the Authority, these hearing dates require that the Application be suspended past June 30, 2000. The parties agreed that the date at which rates could be placed into effect under bond (currently June 30, 2000) would be extended to July 31, 2000.²

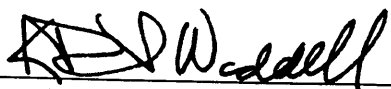
IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED THAT:

1. The Consumer Advocate is hereby given leave to intervene and participate in this proceeding as its interests may appear and receive copies of any notices, orders or other documents filed in this matter;
2. The procedural schedule, as set forth herein, shall govern the proceedings in this matter;
3. For the reasons set forth herein, this matter is suspended until July 31, 2000 and by agreement, Nashville Gas will not put into effect any rates under bond prior to July 31, 2000; and
4. This Initial Order will be considered by the Directors of the Authority at the April 11, 2000 Authority Conference.



GARY HOTVEDT,
ACTING HEARING OFFICER

ATTEST:



K. David Waddell, Executive Secretary

DATE: 4-10-2000

² Nashville Gas agreed to the suspension on the condition that such agreement would not prejudice its ability to put rates into effect at a date prior to July 31, 2000, in the event the Authority renders a decision prior to such date.